

The Way You Smell

Loving Losers - I

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The Way You Smell by gambitsgeekyprincess

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Summary:

Richie starts wearing a new scent and Eddie isn't sure he likes it

The Way You Smell

Author's Note:

Got the idea while thinking about my best friend/ on and off crush of my childhood years. She wore bath and body works cucumber melon for decades and I Hated the smell so much but it was her so I kept my mouth shut.

Richie smells like dirt. Eddie hates it but can't blame him. The whole bloody bathroom incident at Bev's freaked them all out. Eddie even skipped his nightly baths two nights in a row but hes pretty sure Richie hasn't bathed in a week.

This wouldn't be much of a problem if the losers club didn't spend most of their time outside but in a small town like Derry there isn't much else to do. There is a small movie theater but no Arcades or Chuck' E Cheese. The losers club make due with bike rides, hikes down by the quarry and the tree-house in Bill's back yard.

Thats where they are now, squeezed into Bill's tree house listening to his new boom box and just enjoying each others company. Its been roughly a week since they defeated Pennywise and they've all been a bit reluctant to be away from each other too often. Bill and Bev are attached at the hip with Ben not far from the two of them. Stan and Mike Sit together by Ben's side leaving Eddie and Richie resting beneath the window.

Richie has never had any idea of personal space and despite the possible germs that come with skin on skin contact Eddie has never minded until now. Richie was always less clean than Eddie would prefer but at lest he use to smell mostly of soap and laundry detergent. Richie strums his arms in air guitar fashion and the movement sends an air of dirt and sweat up into Eddies nose.

Eddie could move over, there is enough room in the tree-house for all of them to fit comfortably without sitting on top of one another but for some reason he doesn't. He reaches into his fanny pack and sprays a bit of the cheap body spray he picked up two days ago. His mom

didn't approve of cologne and Eddie's been making a point in small rebellions since the " gazebo " incident. Richie smells the cologne and shoots Eddie a grin.

Richie knows what Eddie's been doing and has been helping with more ideas on ways to help Eddie break out of his moms shell. Eddie grins back and despite still smelling sweat pouring off Richie he holds his hand up for a high five. Richie's hand smacks into his and Eddie waits a whole ten minutes before pulling a wet wipe out of his fanny pack to clean his hand. The losers don't comment on it, some habits are hard to break.

Days go by and Richie slowly starts bathing again. Eddie as stopped using wet wipes after every social interaction and if he thinks about it a lot of that has to do with how often Richie touched him when he wasn't bathing. There weren't enough wet wipes in the world to keep up with all the touches and when given the obstacle of choosing between staying clean himself and staying away from Richie, well the choice had been surprisingly easy. After all its kind of hard to worry about germs from dirt when you've been part of a seven way blood pact.

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Richie starts wearing cologne when he turns fifteen. Eddie didn't think he'd ever miss Richie smelling like dirt but that was before Richie discovered obsession for men. Its such a strong scent and Richie drowns himself in it. The cologne is this odd mix of nature ozone and strong chemical musk. It reminds Eddie of the sensation of entering a doctors office, first your in the world surround by trees and then wham, you're hit with antiseptic. Richie says it smells like what he imagine Bruce Willis smells like.

Eddie personally thinks Bruce Willis would have better taste but he just smiles at Richie and nods his agreement. Richie sticks to the one cologne everyday, Eddie likes to switch up his scent to match his mood. Richie seems to enjoy guessing what Eddie's wearing every day. Eddie wishes Richie would change things up a bit but Eddie keeps that thought to himself. He hates the smell but at lest he always knows when Richie's near.

Eddie realizes he may have more than friendly feelings for Richie when he starts feeling his stomach flip at just the hint of the strong cologne. Eddie had honestly suspected he wasn't quite like the other boys in the losers club when he was a kid but like most things he shoved it down deep and did everything by his mothers instructions. Boys were supposed to like girls and the smell of floral perfumes and bubblegum lip gloss. The only people Eddie had ever liked were his fellow losers and he had always liked Richie best.

Eddie hates obsession for men but five months into Richie wearing it on a daily basis Eddie goes out and buys a bottle for himself. He never wears it but when he finds himself missing his best friend or day dreaming of unlikely possibilities he'll pull the bottle out and spray a tad on his pillow or an old shirt. Richie smiles so wide when he finds the bottle in Eddie's room one day while they hang out that Eddie can't help but tell Richie how right he was about it being the best cologne ever. Eddie gets a new bottle of it for Christmas from Richie and he says thank you even though he still has almost a full bottle in his room.

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Richie starts treating Eddie differently when hes sixteen. Eddie doesn't notice it at first. Richie has always treated him a bit differently than the rest of the losers, after all they're best friends. This is something else though. Richie's insulting teasing turn into hidden compliments, Making comments about how only Eddie could pull off pink shorts with red and orange shirts. He bring extra snacks for Eddie and only Eddie at the theater. The biggest difference though is the lack of your mom jokes.

This goes on for about a month before Eddie finally asks Richie Whats up. Richie, much to Eddie's concern, grows quiet. His face warms to a shade of red matching the flowers on his windbreaker. The blush, the silence and the acts of last weeks fly trough Eddie's mind and a light bulb goes off. Richie likes him, Likes him the way Eddie has been liking him for years now. Eddie smiles and Richie matches his grin albeit a bit sheepishly.

They're at Richie's house in his back yard. The rest of the losers are on the way but at the moment they're all alone. Richie's parent's work

late during the weeks so the house is empty as well. Richie still looks around to be sure they are alone before finally leaning into Eddie's personal space. Eddie's breath hitches and just as Richie's lips are about to meet his he smells that same cologne Richie's been wearing for almost two years now. Eddie almost rolls his eyes but then Richie's lips are fully on his and Eddie forgets how much he hates that smell.

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Eddie is twenty years old when he leaves Derry for collage and he knows its for good. College may not last forever but nothing could get him to go back to that small town before he has to. Richie isn't there anymore either, hes out in L. A trying to become a star and Eddie doesn't doubt for one moment that Richie can do it. They're doing the long distance thing and it sucks. He had gotten so use to seeing Richie every day to only seeing him on holidays. He spends the next four years of medical school wearing obsession for men.

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When Eddie graduates Richie is the first person his eyes land on in the audience of the ceremony. Richie's smile is so wide Eddie worries he'll get stuck that way. The ceremony is quick, no more than an hour and a half but it feels like eight years all over again. When everything wraps up and he can finally meet the losers who have gathered to celebrate his accomplishment he flings himself into Richie's arms.

The smell of Obsession for men is stronger than ever since they're both wearing it. Eddie breathes deep despite the burn in his nostrils. They have a huge party that night and Eddie is so glad he doesn't drink when Richie drops to one knee. Eddie nods his head so quickly he gets dizzy. They can't technically get married but California did offer domestic partnerships for same sex couples.They had become one of the first states to do so back in 1999 when Eddie was twenty two. Eddie washappy none the less, especially when Richie slips the silver band on his finger.

He's twenty four and finally done with medical School. Richie is Twenty five by a few months and already making headlines as the

biggest up incoming comedy star. Eddie honestly wasn't sure he would ever be this happy again after everything they went through as kids but here he was. They move to L.A and file for domestic partnership within the year. The scent of Obsession for men lingers in their home like an old ghost but Eddie learns to deal with it.

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Eddie is thirty years old when he decides he doesn't want to stay in the medical field. He's gone off and on all day and night. Between him being on call almost constantly and Richie going on tour every few months the couple barely manages to make time for themselves let alone each other. He quits before he even tells Richie he's unhappy there. Richie isn't mad and instead just asks Eddie what he wants to do. Eddie thought it would be a hard question to answer but it's not. He's known for awhile now what he really wants to do and He tells Richie without a moment's pause that he wants to design clothes for a living.

Richie doesn't laugh or mock him. Richie doesn't ask why or how instead he just says okay with a smile. The next day Richie comes home with a few books on fashion and sketch books for Eddie. He's become a big name in the media biz now and asks Eddie to whip him up a line he can present to his manager. Designing clothes for his partner to model for fans who will clamor for the same outfit is one of the best moments of Eddie's life.

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It's 2017 when they get the call from Mike. Mike is the only member of the losers club who stayed in Derry and even though none of them ever spoke of it they all knew why. It was in case Pennywise came back and now the clown had done so. Richie doesn't want to go back. His humor fails to hide his fear the way it used to when they were kids. Eddie holds him close and whispers I know even as he tells Mike they'll be there as soon as they can.

The clown still resides in the grey water of Derry and the only comfort from the stench for Eddie is the slightly more pleasant stench of Richie's cologne. The colognes become a bit hard to find over the last few years but Richie's not above using his celebrity status to keep

his favorite scent in stock. Eddie is oddly grateful for the fact at the moment.

The battle goes a lot quicker than the one they had all those years ago. Stanley almost doesn't make it. IT has him by the throat and even though hes still the smallest member of the losers club Eddies chargers forwards with a steel pole. He knocks IT off balance and Stanley goes free but then Eddie is lifted and flung across the room. He has a moment to think about how much hes going to miss the smell of that awful cologne before everything goes black. He wakes up much later to the sound of beeping machines and a anti-septic smell that isn't quite like the rest in the room.

" Richie? " He croaks out.

" Hey there Eddie spaghetti, How ya feeling ? ". Richie says as he takes Eddie's hand.

" Did we get IT? " Eddie aks.

" We did. We absolutely did. its over. ". Richie whispers.

" Good, because if that thing comes back when I'm seventy you guys are gonna have to do this without me? " Eddie says with a laugh that leads to a coughing fit.

" Easy there, Baby boy, you've been out for a few days. don't strain your throat. " Richie intones.

" The only thing straining my throat is that god awful cologne of yours. " Eddie teases.

" Oh shut up, you know you love it. " Richie protest.

" Yeah, I really do. " Eddie assures.

Author's Note:

I have an alternative ending to this that I may post one day if anyone is interested.